

## FOREWORD

The decisionist theory expounded here wants to be strictly descriptive. For us, it is not a matter of defending the right to absolutely autonomous and the deepest personal decisions of an existence plagued by abstractions and systems, which is nevertheless ceaselessly pulsating and searching for its own path, as has been the case with the hitherto leading versions of decisionism,<sup>†</sup> – on the contrary: it will be shown that this militant decisionism can neither be imposed permanently nor on a socially not inconsiderable scale, even though it might be (or might have been) a regular phenomenon of protest in certain conjunctures of the history of ideas. But on the other hand, it is no less important to furnish proof of the thesis that the thought, which wants to stand out as the opponent of militant decisionism, must *de facto* proceed decisionistically and also be based on a fundamental decision, no matter how energetically this has to be disputed time and time again for reasons still to be explained. And finally, we shall maintain that in both cases things could not have actually been different from what they have been until today, and that correctives and wishes do not promote understanding, but polemics, as in fact originally they were conceived polemically.

The equal distance of our theory from both militant decisionism and its opponents is given already due to its descriptive character. Because unlike our theory both above-mentioned schools of thought are based on normative convictions. Militant decisionism sees in the decision not merely inevitable reality, but has made it out to be a duty and not seldom an emotional ritual, full of effects; that is why it could also be called prescriptive or normative decisionism. From its point of view the individual OUGHT to reach existential heights and depths whilst shaking the dust of the normal and the self-evident off his feet and throwing off the pressure of powerful, supra-personal and impersonal social and intellectual-spiritual constructions and experiencing for himself all the sharpness of alternative ways of life. Whoever can put himself in this situation and bear such a responsibility, whoever keeps his own consciousness and conscience awake at all times and ready for the decision, he is held to be *eo ipso* worthier than those who make do with professed certainties and norms. The actual belittling of non-

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<sup>†</sup> In the Greek text the author adds: as they appear in the so-called existential philosophies

decisionists, which results from this position, is obviously founded in a certain value-conception of the 'true' destiny of human existence. Yet this conception necessarily misjudges how great an existential intensity a stance, which understands itself exactly as conscientious or even merry subordination to all kinds of commanding authoritative principles, can be able to be, and how near the intensity of this stance is often found to the intensity of the personal decision.

But the opponents of militant decisionism are also obstructed by their polemical zeal from having insight into such a compromising kinship, which results from the fixation of both sides on some normative element, even if each one defines the content of that element completely differently; consequently, the acuteness of the opposition as regards content conceals the weighty formal structural similarity of the fundamental stance. Be that as it may: the specific normativism of the opponents of militant decisionism is quite transparent through their description of the latter. Namely, from their point of view decisionism in general appears as extolment or at least as an unleashing of subjective arbitrariness, as an appeal to disregard well-intentioned and well-ordered thought in favour of evil explosions or chance notions, and not least of all as direct or indirect partisanship of intellectual-spiritual (if not also political) force and against Reason which is ready and eager to talk. The normative implication or presupposition of this critique is obvious: thought should not only come to generally binding, that is, morally acceptable conclusions (besides, decisionists could decide in favour of precisely the same thing that also non-decisionists like to consider the best, e.g. God or freedom), but also proceed faultlessly in the process, namely respect generally valid rules and be as moderate as possible – in other words: to appear as a credible, serious servant, interpreter and defender of objective values and truths. The internal logic and social function of this attitude, which has hitherto been dominant and will certainly remain so, will occupy us in greater detail later. In anticipation, only that partly (for some of those affected) paradoxical and partly (for us) piquant situation will be recalled, in which parties, which expressly and jointly reject decisionism, thereupon fight one another with the same force in the name of 'objective' values and truths. Precisely the general, however as regards content (very) different invocation of 'objective truth' finally shakes belief in that truth and gives militant decisionistic approaches nourishment – even if only for the short period of an interregnum, i.e. until the imposition of the more powerful 'objectivity' in each particular situation.

Thus, our descriptive decisionism does not accept either decision as Ought or the dutiful binding of decisions to a supposedly objective Ought. Against



the opponents of militant decisionism it must be stressed that to combat decisionism and to be oneself free from decisionism are two different things, in other words, the plastic subjectivity of the decision can hide perfectly well behind the supposedly firm objectivity of the Ought. Against militant or normative decisionism we can again say that the thesis that every action and thought is based on a (not necessarily personal and conscious) decision anyway, automatically makes the deontological character of the decision totally superfluous. Only this double setting aside of normativism makes possible purely descriptive decisionist theory. But also conversely: only through insight into the social necessity of the predominance of normativism is this theory capable of remaining descriptive, i.e. value-free. This might sound paradoxical, and yet, in the cold light of day, theoretical value-freedom and recognition of the supremacy of thought bound to values and norms in the practical field inseparably belong together. Because an observation is completely value-free, not just when it is aware of the subjectivity and relativity of values, but only from the moment when it, for its part, totally renounces the role of enlightener and of therapist – in short: of leader – for that matter: the tendency toward normativism not least of all really springs from the desire to play such a role. Value-free knowledge cannot set as its goal the destruction of illusions because it became value-free precisely due to the ascertainment of the indestructibility of illusions which are in fact a necessity of life. Because of that it must lead a parasitic existence and address itself exclusively to those who know how to appreciate, in practice, superfluous, indeed inhibitory insights. If in certain times it gains greater publicity, that is only because in the meanwhile normativist thought is going through a crisis and wants to be confirmed anew in polemics against it – or simply wants to seek scapegoats. Since value-free knowledge must for ever be denied broad approval, its public appearance thus merely results in the mobilisation of its opponents and in the wider argumentative refinement of normativistic positions. That is neither good nor bad, only inevitable. If things turned out differently, then this world would no longer be the world from whose description value-free observation emerged.

The last sentence implies that logically consistent value-free observation is founded on a certain conception of human affairs, whose interrelation it is our intention to underline and elucidate. In the attempt to deny or at least hide this interrelation, that embarrassing situation comes into being in which some contemporary positivists or 'critical' rationalists, who want to pose as value-free scientists in order to abruptly metamorphose into winged metaphysicists when it is a matter of the defence of liberal moralism or



'freedom', for instance, constantly find themselves. Incidentally, this kind of value-freedom never imagined conclusively bidding farewell to meddling in party conflict or to possible leadership roles, but it itself constituted a polemical act, namely it turned itself from the beginning against the Marxist-Leninist declaration of belief in the partisanship of science and did this from the point of view of liberal conceptions of the autonomy of the various basic sectors of social life. Such representatives of value-freedom of course emphasise the ideal of absence of presuppositions as regards world-views, but they hardly go into the interrelation that exists between the outlining of such an ideal in general and certain assumptions regarding content, anthropology and the philosophy of culture. And they do not do this because their value-freedom is half-hearted and their deeper motivation is another, which is bound to norms. Were immanent radical scepticism, i.e. the normative indifference of value-free observation in its connection with a certain conception of human affairs, frankly represented, they would only actually give welcome weapons to the 'totalitarian' opponents of liberal positivism, who generously offer the highest bids in the auction of norms. But one cannot do that as long as one wants to somehow remain a participant in the undertaking of the betterment of the world – even in the sober form of the critical dissector of illusions.

Furthermore, sometimes it is feared that the consistent all-round foundation of value-freedom would take away from it the character of a strict epistemological principle and would turn it into a new form of suspicious ideological interpretation of the world. Namely, if the connection of value-free observation with a certain conception of human affairs is openly admitted, then that observation appears to be tainted exactly with that relativity, which from its point of view is intrinsic only to standpoints bound to values. Indeed, against decisionism and scepticism – whose logical interrelation with value-free observation is rightly ascertained by opponents, even if only with polemical intent – very often arguments of the following type are used: decisionism relativises everything because it reduces everything to decisions bound to a particular outlook and perspective; since it itself according to its own presuppositions necessarily stems from such a decision, it cannot be theoretically binding and compelling (traditionally put: how can a scepticist be convinced of the correctness of his own position when he doubts the correctness of all positions?). Nevertheless, popular philosophical arguments of that sort only have rhetorical, i.e. psychological value and can already be refuted in terms of formal logic. If one formulates them in the form of a classical syllogism, then in their major premiss, precisely that which is assumed is what is rejected in the conclusion, i.e. the



conclusion contradicts the premiss instead of it itself containing that premiss; however it is logically false to accept the basic assumption of scepticism in order to be able thereby to question the validity of this same scepticism. Incidentally, the scepticism which is connected with (descriptive) decisionism does not affect the possibility of objective knowledge, but only the putting forward of objectively valid norms. This contradistinction between objective knowledge and objective normative principles implies that the former is thwarted wherever it goes by the attempt to arrive at the latter – whereby here under normative principles not only is the usual formulation of moral commands to be understood, but every world-image is devised with regard to the command of self-preservation and increase of power of an individual or a collective; only in the framework of such a world-image do morals in their narrow sense also appear to be based and meaningful. This again signifies that only bidding farewell to every norm and every claim to self-preservation and power can make possible the knowledge of human affairs. The price of value-free knowledge is life, and because of that its prospects are conceivably slight.

In the intellectual-spiritual atmosphere which was created by the dominant normativism of all shades, it is regarded as an unworthy triviality of refined thought or perhaps even as forbidden coarseness amongst educated persons to ask the elementary question: why have norms and values in history until today not had the effect that they ought to have had according to their own promise or self-justification in the sense of the harmonious co-existence of all people – or even: how have they been able to be put so often and so eagerly at the service of aggression and extermination? The sad facts cannot be disputed by anyone, and the uneasy feeling which they arouse in normativists has been articulated with classical succinctness in great metaphysical systems of the past, which apart from the theoretical guarantees for the victory of 'good' also seek to offer an explanation for its absence until now. If such an explanation could sometimes be cleverly thought out, the reason is only because it was conveyed in the framework of a thought-construction, which as a whole stood under the aegis of a (still) to be expected victory of 'good' and correspondingly either interpreted 'evil' as non-existent or even as the unconscious instrument of the realisation of 'good'. If one sets aside eschatological belief and examines the hitherto practical failure of values with the help of immanent, i.e. purely axiological criteria, then this failure will necessarily appear as an enigma. Only a theory of human action and of the function of the 'spirit' in it, which is free from all normativistic postulates, is able to solve that enigma – that is, a descriptive decisionist theory. A normativistically motivated and inspired theory cannot

completely explain the reasons for its own practical failure, unless it does away with itself as objective truth. Here lies the deeper reason why the sensitive spot of normativists and moralists as far as possible is not touched, although it should actually be at the epicentre of the interest of people who toil for the good of mankind. Of course, here we must observe the following: when we speak of the practical failure of normativism, we have in mind the distance between the nominal value of its consciously set goals and real historical events; none the less, normativism, in this or that version, remains socially successful because it serves certain functions, which are totally independent of the way its representatives understand themselves, whereby its failure in the sense above exactly constitutes an essential presupposition for the carrying out of its objective functions and consequently for its social predominance. This apparent paradox will also have to be clarified below.

In this treatise we shall firstly examine the concept of decision in general and describe the practical pressures of concrete situations, which make (world-view) decisions indispensable as the sole means of self-preservation and increase of power of different collective and individual subjects on each particular occasion. Given this universality, indeed anthropological rootedness of the decision, it then is a matter of mentioning the reasons why militant decisionism nevertheless necessarily remains a peripheral phenomenon and why decisions are imposed at least much more easily when they conceal or deny their own character as decisions. Following that, the significance of our descriptive decisionistic observation for the comprehension of the structure of thought-products is to be expounded in addition to examining the definitive polemical component of apparently pure theory. And to conclude, we want to discuss the matter which we touched on above when we discussed the prerequisites of consistent value-free observation in relation to content, namely those prerequisites relating to the anthropology and the sociology of culture, and make some remarks on the question of Ought.



# I. DECISION AS POWER-CLAIM

**D**e-cision (*de-cisio*) is the act or process of separation from which a world-image results, which is capable of guaranteeing the ability at orientation that is necessary for self-preservation. Before the decision there is no world as concrete ordered Whole in the perception of a correspondingly concrete subject, i.e. a subject taking a certain place in this Whole; merely a pre-world exists, i.e. a motley variety or a more or less loose sum of in themselves equal materials, impressions, movements and inclinations, which in this meaningless primordial state can neither provide a reliable framework of orientation nor motivate one to promising action or justify such action in retrospect. Through the act or process of separation the constituent elements of the pre-world lose their equal value and are divided into the relevant and the irrelevant, the superordinate and the subordinate, whereby the former form the basis for a world-view blueprint. That act or process is subjective, i.e. it is determined by the cognitive and volitive perspective of the subject of the decision, first of all in the sense that in any case it refers only to whatever appears, often only momentarily, in this perspective. Since the pre-world of each necessarily finite subject of the decision does not contain all possible constituent elements of all possible pre-worlds – i.e. not all that is or can be conceived of – so the act or process of separation is carried out only with regard to a part of the objectively existent; the remaining part is condemned from the outset to actual non-existence. Likewise, that part of the pre-world which goes against the outlining of a, to some extent, coherent world-image, i.e. which is not even able to be placed in the lowest ranks of the world-view hierarchy coming into being, is pressed into actual non-existence. Therefore, the decision is based on a double delimitation of the entirety of the objectively existent: it takes place on a field de-cided (viz. separated) from the beginning – thereby it is, at least in part, already decided in advance – and over and above that it forces the removal of those elements of this same field, which stand in the way of its endeavours, to treat them in accordance with its inclinations. Consequently the decision means both the, one moment, wild, the next, mild violation of the unordered reality of a given pre-world and the, one moment, stringent, the next, contingent constitution of the reality of an organised world. Ordering and subordering, integrating and dividing up, assimilating and repelling, forming and splitting necessarily belong together in it.

Because the finiteness of the subject of the decision does not permit any other way of extracting an entire world-image and hence an all-round orientation apart from the elevation of each familiar and properly worked part of the objectively existent to a true and single Whole.

The concept of the objectively existent is not to be understood here in its traditional metaphysical sense. The thesis of the perspectivity of the decision does not imply *ex contrario* that there is one objective world, which is only looked at from a different point of view in each particular instance and only from a partial aspect. Incidentally, it would be pointless to compare the subjectivity of the perspective of the decision with the 'objectivity of the world' as the yardstick of a judgement; the 'world' is always seen from a perspective, and it is impossible to look at this perspective and the world simultaneously from the outside in order to be able to compare them with one another. Therefore, when there is talk here of the objectively existent in contrast to the perspective of the subject of the decision, what is simply meant by it is that outside of the world, which came from a certain de-cision, there are also other worlds, which are reduced to different de-cisions. Were the objectively existent defined as the sum of all possible pre-worlds as well as of all other phenomenal worlds which came about through de-cisions, then the subjectivity of the perspective of each decision consists first of all in that the latter cannot – and also in accordance with its nature does not want to – comprehend the objectively existent, although its world-view construction in itself makes up a part of the objectively existent. Accordingly, the insight into the subjectivity of the decision is not founded in a metaphysical conception of the 'truly Is', but in the empirical ascertainment of the existence of many, more or less different decisions and world-images; as an insight it is objective in the sense that it can be obtained from every perspective, since all the subjects of the decision (can) know of the existence of other decisions, i.e. differently structured world-view blueprints or simply convictions, even if each of them wishes the violent or argumentative extermination of these latter decisions. From the mere comparative observation of empirically existing world-images also follows the ascertainment that in each of them different components of the objectively existent are shown to advantage each time, i.e. they are felt to be relevant or irrelevant, superordinate or subordinate and are dealt with correspondingly. Because of that all those components, which the act or process of separation had to suppress or drive out on each particular occasion, become noticeable only from the point of view of different decisions, i.e. differently organised worlds. In the perspective of each de-cision, the worlds which came from different de-cisions by no means



deserve the status of a complete, true world; they are thus dealt with only as constituent elements or materials of the pre-world, which can of course possibly be used for the construction of one's own organised world, but in that situation they are to be subordinated to the structure and goals of the latter.

If the extent and the violence of the separation are not able to be perceived at all, the reason for it is that after the making of the world-image – precisely through separation – the judgement of things can take place exclusively on the basis of the criteria and intellectual means provided by that world-image. In the eyes of each respective subject of the decision the world-image must be all-embracing, i.e. in its original form or at least in its form worked on *ad hoc* it is suitable for all possible ends of orientation; therefore whatever for this subject is fundamentally and in each particular situation relevant is only aided by exactly the relevant element divesting itself of its subjective character, to be elevated to objective generality, so that the separated world does not appear as subjective and partial, that is, relative and hence finally insecure, but as the sole complete and consequently real world – an impression, which seems confirmed by the fact that this world, formally seen, makes up an organised, in accordance with an immanent standpoint, self-sufficient ensemble. Starting from a structurally more or less complete and functionally more or less reliable world-image, a retrospective analysis of its genesis, which would not be self-justification, is thus impossible – unless the subject of the decision is on the point of betraying its prior decision in favour of a new one. If this is not the case, then it can only see its world-image through those eyes which learnt to see precisely in the act or process of separation. The pre-established harmony of the world-image and the concrete viewpoint of the subject of the decision is in other words reduced to the fact that this viewpoint was formed and refined precisely in and through the de-cision, from which the world-image came. However, it itself does not constitute anything other than the expression of the concrete identity of that subject from which it is evident that this identity, for its part, is formed hand in hand with the world-image in question. World-image and identity, identity and decision are necessarily closely linked to each other, especially since identity can be defined as the precise positioning of the subject within the world that came from the de-cision, i.e. as the exhaustive determination of its relations with the constituent elements or the hierarchical grades of the world-image in each particular instance. Without an ordered world there is no identity. But order and subordination are connected within the de-cision, and that is why identity too grows only on the basis of separations, exclusions and subjugations. Indeed, the exclusion



of irrelevant elements constitutes the precondition for (and at the same time the consequence of) the concentration of the subject of the decision on whatever is relevant – that is, ultimately on itself, and exactly through that the first and most important step on the path toward the attainment of its own identity is made.

A subject, which owes its world and at the same time its identity and concrete viewpoint to the de-cision, necessarily fuses, as it were, with that de-cision. In this respect identity means identification with that act or process of the de-cision which is crystallised in the outlining of a world-image. However, since the latter provides a reliable framework of orientation, that is why identity is shown principally in the ability to be orientated steadily and easily, to be moved by its own impetus and to act as well in various situations with stable objectives and uniform expediency. Hence, the world coming from the de-cision constitutes the sphere of activity of the subject of the decision which is conscious of its identity. And if the active stay in this sphere contributes to the further clarification and strengthening of the sense of identity, the reason is that it constantly tests the results of exactly that de-cision with which the subject identifies, in order to have an identity at all; the test naturally pertains to the suitability of the world-image as framework of orientation under all possible circumstances and is tantamount to a continual attempt at reinforcing this same world-image. Now the objects, which the subject of the decision (taken) encounters in its sphere of activity, are no longer those of the pre-world (either qualitatively or quantitatively), but are found within its ordered world-image, even if in various positions and at different grades, and are viewed and dealt with on the basis of the fundamental criteria which the already made world-image itself embodies and offers for use. This means: as product of a subject's decision the ordered world in itself is not the object which stands opposite to this same subject and which can be dealt with by the subject just as it likes; because the subject owes its identity and viewpoint not to its confrontation with the/(its) ordered world, but precisely to the coming into being of this world. Its friendly or inimical clashes with certain objects occur within its world and are dealt with in its perspective. Thus, they take place on a terrain ideationally-spiritually prepared in accordance with the needs of the subject. Because should the world coming from the de-cision provide a reliable framework of orientation, then it must be a home for the subject of the decision; and it can be a home for it only if it is constructed as such a home from the beginning.

Therefore, in its friendly or inimical encounters with objects the subject of the decision relies on the reality of the ordered world and it even invokes it



in order to give emphasis to its respective ends, since it constructed this reality for itself and already through its de-cision it set the course for its interpretation; the de-cision constructs and simultaneously interprets *a limine* the reality of the ordered world by determining the relevance and status, in fact even the existence and non-existence of the constituent elements of the pre-world. As verdict on existence and non-existence, as separation of the relevant from the irrelevant and as the establishment of an order the de-cision sets aside the chaotic diversity of form of the pre-world and consequently brings about a most welcome relief; namely it enables the subject in question not only to solve problems, which from now on become clear, but to make problems in general solvable on the basis of permanent criteria and methods (strictly speaking: to set itself problems as solvable problems), whilst it formulates them in simplified, clear and already familiar form, i.e. it pours them into the (symbolic) language of the world-image and thereby it automatically checks their meaning for its own identity which is interwoven with this world-image. The ponderability of events is the precondition of their lasting control, but something becomes ponderable only through its incorporation into an ensemble of already known factors, so that the curve of its behaviour can be calculated (in advance) with regard to a familiar coordinate system. As a consequence, knowledge is the reduction of the hitherto unknown and unrecognised to the known and recognised, that is, finally, the inclusion of the elements in question on each occasion in the existing world-image framework, which of course is no mere receptacle for the accumulation of relevant content, but rather a special automatic mechanism for the sifting, valuation and joining together of interesting data – and simultaneously it itself is the formation which grows out of that mechanism. Thus, there is a deep interrelation between orientation and knowledge and the same holds for the relations between knowledge and identity or knowledge and de-cision. Identity, orientation and knowledge are fused within the same world-image coming from the de-cision, and finally the assumption of the objectivity of the world-image, i.e. of the sole objective truth that goes with it, festively confirms this fusion: the more objective the world-image and the summarised knowledge in it or crystallised viewpoint appears, the stronger will the sense of identity be and the more certain will the orientation seem. The practical successes of the subject of the decision signify in its view the conclusive proof of the objectivity of its world-image. In the process, it necessarily overlooks that these successes – in so far as they are causally connected with the world-image and not merely symbolically – constitute solutions to problems which are only meaningful within the world-image in question and are set



exclusively on the basis of its own presuppositions, especially since this world-image was outlined and worked on precisely in connection with the formulation of, and solution to, problems of such a type.

As the subject's home and sphere of activity and at the same time as unity of content and viewpoint, of reality and order or standard of evaluation, the world-image makes possible the dealings with the objects (persons and things), which come across each other within its boundaries. However, the fact that it is based on the separation, i.e. on the violation of the objectively existent, even though it seems objective and all-embracing in its own perspective, avenges itself through the necessity of searching in its dealings with those objects for the solution in each particular instance, which the concrete case demands or commands. In other words: the real, but from the point of view of the world-image not perceived gulf between the world-image itself and the objectively existent has an imperceptible effect in that the criteria provided by the world-image, at least in many cases, do not allow from the start safe, as it were, blind dealings with the objects found in the world-image. But on the other hand, since the subject of the decision absolutely relies on the world-image as the sole possible stable framework of orientation, there remains no other way out for it than to interpret its steps, which it takes in accordance with its dealings with the objects – that is, its isolated or partial decisions – in the light of the world-image's criteria, or to justify them by invoking those criteria, whereby the use of more or less successful tricks of rationalisation proves to be unavoidable. This must, as a rule, successfully happen, otherwise the functional ability of the world-image and consequently also the identity of the subject of the underlying decision are endangered. None the less, this subject at any time faces the task of acting independently in dealings with the objects of its world and of taking steps that are not always foreseeable. Its world-image does not guarantee automatic practical settlement of problems set daily, but affords it first of all only identity and orientation, that is to say it merely makes those problems solvable. Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish the isolated or partial decisions, which the subject makes in its dealings with its world's objects, from that original and definitive fundamental decision, which brought this world into being, in particular as framework of orientation in taking such isolated decisions. Of course, there are isolated decisions which appear to possess the status of a world-view fundamental decision since they consist exactly in an open and dynamic partisanship in favour of a comprehensive world-view position. But this world-view partisanship takes place precisely in its dealings with the objects (persons or things) of a certain world and presupposes the constitution of this world from the point of view



of the subject of a de-cision. From this constitution it is evident who the foe is, against whom it is necessary to defend its own world-image and consequently also its own identity.

We just indicated how the relations between the fundamental decision and the isolated decisions are formed on the basis of the former after making a world-image; later (p.??) more will still be said on this matter. What appears far more difficult is ascertaining the contribution of isolated decisions and the practical steps connected with them in the formation of the fundamental de-cision and its corresponding world-image. First of all, it is clear that isolated decisions against the background of an ordered world-image (irrespective of whether they refer consciously to that world-image or if they unconsciously appropriate and apply its criteria) are something essentially different to such decisions in a world-view vacuum; the confrontation with the objects of the pre-world differs fundamentally from the confrontation with the objects of the world. Without the interrelation with other objects within an ordered world the objects are something different than in that interrelation; and as long as the subject is found within the pre-world, it has existence, but surely no fixed identity. Of course, its more or less vague sense of its own self is manifested, often with elemental force, in endeavouring to attain pleasure and avoid pain, and this endeavour drives towards isolated, not always and not completely coherent decisions and practical steps. Through such fragmentary and contradictory experiences, where self-preservation not seldom can be at stake and anyhow unremittingly seeks to be safeguarded in different milieus and under different circumstances on each particular occasion, the path passes from the pre-world to the world, from mere existence to the subject's identity. None the less, the beginnings of this path remain hermeneutically inaccessible, after all they are lost in the indecipherable, shimmering biopsychical structure of the subject, in the labyrinth of its existential core, where the stirrings of organic matter become what we are in the habit of calling 'spirit' and 'thought' – and they are also lost in the fullness of barely reconstructible occurrences of each moment, which trigger off small and large actions and reactions and visibly or imperceptibly make their mark on the subject being formed. This path to the de-cision, to the ordered world and to fixed identity can proceed constantly gradually or else end with a qualitative leap, which takes in and makes use of previous quantitative steps; that is why we speak here of the act or process of the decision. The scientific reconstruction of the path to the de-cision does not however only suffer because its beginnings are empirically comprehensible with difficulty or hardly at all; exactly because that happens, we cannot avoid reconstructing this path beginning from its



end, namely orientating our research consciously or unconsciously to the question as to how it arrived at the result which we see before us. In the process, some elements are necessarily overlooked, not recognised or disregarded, which even before that result is outlined, i.e. as long as the outcome of the development was still open, may have possibly played a not insignificant role, to afterwards flag or, in accordance with the new state of consciousness, alter and adapt themselves. Therefore, even if functional observation sometimes seems to lapse into teleology, nevertheless the course of the necessarily only sketchily reconstructed path to the de-cision is not teleologically predetermined.

Be that as it may: the de-cision as act or process, from which a world-image and within that world-image an expediently placed identity of the subject of this same decision comes, only constitutes the point of crystallisation or the visible synopsis of a long and complicated prehistory. Of course, the way the subject, which is endowed with fixed identity, of the de-cision (taken) – whose own composition and situation it itself is able to comprehend and describe only based on the criteria provided by its own world-image, whereby its reconstruction of its own prehistory of necessity becomes self-justification –, sees itself is hardly convincing in view of how crooked, opaque, uncertain and uncontrolled or even accidental the path toward the world-view decision is/(has been). If the subject of the decision conceded this, it would have automatically, in particular precisely with regard to its own self, given up the claim to steady orientation and ponderability, which it expects its world-image in general so emphatically provides. Thus, it prefers (and in this illusion the militant decisionists gladly follow it), to pass off its own world-view decision as the outcome of a conscious and hard struggle, as inevitable or at least an existentially fully loaded choice between (extreme) alternatives. Of course in the process it must disregard that the alternatives, just like good and evil, constitute antithetical constituent elements of the same world-image, i.e. they are looked upon as such only in a certain world-view perspective. That applies even if it is a matter of a choice between two different world-images or perhaps even a transition from one to another: because in this case the subject concerned just changes sides, i.e. friends and foes, none the less, the world-image existing against the background of this friend-foe relationship remains in its basic outline unchanged. Therefore, the genesis of a world-image through a de-cision is something different from the choice between already existing and competing world-views, because this choice already presupposes the world-image at whose epicentre is this competition. When the subject confuses the world-view de-cision and the choice between



alternatives, then it is the victim of an optical illusion, particularly because it wants to and also must preserve in its own eyes its own sovereign convictions and self-control, that is, its own identity as ponderable magnitude and definitive rule of orientation. Many a theologian, e.g. who wanted to have understood and presented his partisanship as an answer to a dramatic Either-Or, nevertheless was at no moment of his life just as much convinced atheist as he was religious man, just as much refined aesthete as strict moralist: at the moment of the decision as choice between alternatives one cannot simply create oneself from the beginning. And even if a real change from one belief or way of life to another had taken place, again the subject concerned would not have stopped viewing the world in the light of this and no other alternative, in any case excluding in advance the possibility of an exceedingly harmonious or completely meaningless world-image: as we said, the world-view decision is already pre-decided through the delimitation of the world *vis-à-vis* the pre-world, irrespective of how the internal hierarchy of the world turns out in detail.

In the language of militant decisionism the decision not only signifies a choice between alternatives, but also an act, whose motivating force and grounds for justification lie *ultra rationem* and directly express the deeper needs and inclinations of existence. Because we want to underline this same primacy of the existential element, we retain here and moreover use the term 'decision', although we mainly apply to it a meaning other than what the militant decisionists understand by it. These people have two cases in mind: either one decides something in accordance with one's inclinations precisely because the rational consideration of the alternatives has convinced him of the impossibility of a logically compelling preference for one of the two, or one decides something from the beginning and strives for the imposition of one's decision, holding in contempt rational (counter-)arguments as such. In both cases the decisive factor is the clash of discursive Reason and the existence that directly and by inspection comprehends certainty – a clash, which however becomes felt or even comes to the fore as such only in certain culture groups and times, that is, only within certain world-images; thus its emphasis not only presupposes clear standards regarding world-views, but with them also a sovereign subject that possesses that identity, which makes itself known in the decision. On top of that, militant decisionists accept that the primacy of the existential element actually only reveals itself where the above-mentioned world-view standards are approved. Consequently, it does not merely make a mistake, but lapses into a blatant rationalistic prejudice: namely it adopts the view that the subject behaves actually in accordance with its own understanding of itself,



and that is why it thinks that existence can only or principally make headway when it asserts itself against whatever is foreign towards its essence, since it has consciously deployed itself for that purpose. Apart from the fact that this deployment can very well be an act of thought (we shall return to that matter on the occasion of the discussion of the problem of rationalism, p.??), the elementary question is asked: what becomes of that existence which rejects and fights the schema and ideal of militant decisionists? Does it stop having an existence, in particular an active one, only because it does such a thing? Only rationalistic prejudice, in which the militant decisionists are unintentionally trapped, would allow the reasoning that existence is already paralysed because the subject in question makes the claim of complying exclusively with the ascertainties and commands of (discursive) Reason. Here we are dealing with a patent absurdity, which a look at the real life of those who are accustomed to being called rationalists can refute straight away. Therefore, if we want to take seriously and retain all along the line the connection between existence and decision, then we must not only give the existential element a more comprehensive sense, but also correspondingly modify the concept of decision, so that it does not have to depend anymore on such theoretically infertile and polemically meant comparisons like existence vs. discursive thought. One such concept of decision is exactly that which refers to the parallel genesis of world-image and identity. It is existentially meant both in the sense that it encompasses every existence (even those of the rationalists), and in the sense that presently in it are all strata of existence, including the unconscious and discursive thought. Exactly because existence is given *eo ipso* in all subjects and exactly because decision means the primacy of the existential element, the decision is a universal phenomenon which is not imagined without any subject or any existence. If the militant decisionists do not want to admit this, the reason for it lies in their (unspoken) normativism, namely in the fact that they always have in mind an existence of a certain and special quality, a 'true and genuine' existence.

Existence and decision fuse within the fundamental stance, namely within the concrete practical *habitus* of an existence endowed with identity. Therefore, the fundamental stance is the visible identity in which not only is the permanent final state, that is, the 'character' of the subject expressed, but also the subject's history is summarised. The history of the existence is the history of the decision, which culminates in the sketching of a world-image and in a solid outline of an identity of this same existence. But the history of the decision takes place in all strata and at all levels of existence, which in the meantime it correspondingly shapes, as it is enriched with a number of



things or allows other things to become useless. That is why it is that the existence, henceforth as a practically concretised identity in a fundamental stance, is completely identified with the de-cision as its own history and with the world-image created thanks to the de-cision; 'rationalists' and 'irrationalists', in so far as they have an identity and a fundamental stance and in so far as they represent world-conceptions, are equally outcomes, conveyers and champions of existential decisions, whose history they do embody in their own fundamental stance, however they can reconstruct and tell that history only in the form of a self-justification – at least as long as they keep to their decision. Now of fundamental significance is the ascertainment that this history of the decision, which is a history of existence, only finds a temporary conclusion or high point in the identity and the world-image; otherwise the paradox comes into being of an ending of the activity of the decision precisely at the beginning of the activity of the organised subject within an organised world. In so far as a schematised expression is permitted here at all, we must say the decision-making activity of the subject is continued even after attainment of a fixed identity and after the outlining of a world-image. At this point it is directed to the constituent elements or objects of the world, which are separated from each other and combined with one another, so that the possibility of concentration of the subject on a certain goal or field within the world is offered. But the large and small decisions in the world constitute the continuation, the outflow and very often in fact important complementary formative factors of the decision bringing about the world-image and identity. Thus, it is difficult, if at all possible, to differentiate the vigour of this decision, as well as its concrete formation, from the vigour and formation of the (at least logically subordinate) partial decisions, because in each one of these the history of existence is partially or completely reflected – and at the same time it is extended or diverted according to the most recent needs of self-preservation. From that a simple reason sheds light on this continuity, interaction or even consubstantiality of the world-view fundamental decision and partial decisions within the ordered world: with the coming into being of the world-image and identity, the instinct of and struggle for self-preservation, which originally pressed toward that coming into being, does not come to a standstill. On the contrary: world-image and identity give to the instinct of self-preservation reliable weapons in order for it to be able to conduct its struggles with still greater self-conviction, in a more refined manner and for longer periods than previously, whereby the subject, if it does not want to gamble away the advantages of the framework of orientation that has been gained, has to learn to translate its world-view decision into many individual



theoretical and practical decisions and consequently partly to formulate afresh and partly to discover anew the first decision, if this should be necessary. The constant and pressing presence of the instinct of and struggle for self-preservation in the pre-world and world therefore makes the continuity and reciprocal penetration of the fundamental decision and partial decisions inevitable. The latter as a rule are not deduced in a purely logical manner from the former, but rather they are joined together with the fundamental decision in a Whole in the course of a dynamic process.

But now times come in which self-preservation is particularly endangered and special self-discipline is necessary. Precisely then self-contemplation grows, namely the need for clarification and reinforcement of one's own identity within the world-image that is interwoven with it – and precisely then it is attempted to the extent that it is possible, to put down all isolated decisions to the world-view fundamental decision with which the identity of the subject identifies itself, or to justify them with the world-view fundamental decision's help. This shows after all that the conceptual separation between both the above-mentioned kinds of decision, however regularly and frequently they may be channeled into one another, is neither factually false nor heuristically infertile. The often empirically ascertainable priority of the fundamental stance *vis-à-vis* isolated partial decisions also allows the same thing to be inferred, namely when we believe, incidentally very often not unjustly, to know in advance what practical steps of a subject, whose character we know well, are to be expected in a particular situation. The mediation between fundamental decision and partial decisions takes place through the fundamental stance, but in itself the fundamental stance, as the visible identity which it is, is not interested in the particular, but in the general, namely it cares about the preservation of the thought-style and the commands of the fundamental decision in the partial decisions, so that their coherence and with it the stable orientation of the subject is guaranteed in accordance with the subject's world-image. If the criteria relating to a world-view that are embodied in the identity or fundamental stance are established and indisputable, then the partial decisions can be regarded even as tactical or technical problems and be treated accordingly. Precisely because what is fundamental in them is not the issue, the puzzling element can here be much more strongly marked than in the fundamental decision; this is how that – usually called situation of the decision – arises, which demands a decision in the sense of a choice. If the puzzling element characterises the fundamental decision far less, if at all, than the respective partial decisions, the reason is that the whole existence of the subject is involved in the fundamental decision, through which the degree of certainty of world-image and identity



arrives at a *non plus ultra*. No arguments taken from the outside in favour of the fundamental decision or the existence that is fully involved in it can actually be cited, although this is attempted from time to time on the part of those affected in the interest of the fundamental decision's imposition; but such arguments are really already constituent elements of the existence, the way it sees itself simultaneously forms its self-justification and its state of existence constitutes the strongest argument in favour of its state of existence.

The main feature of the fundamental decision, both in the course of its crystallisation and in the course of its practical unfolding within the world brought about ideationally by it itself is therefore the full existential participation of the subject in question – that means: the full presence of its multidimensional instinct of self-preservation and its unconscious just as much as its consciousness and its discursive Reason, so that not only the elementary impulses, but also the mechanisms of rationalisation referring to them can take effect simultaneously and hand in hand. Now the full existential participation of the subject of the decision not only follows when the decision is its own doing, but also when it is subordinated to pre-existing decisions. Thus, existential intensity can be a consequence both of an existential clash, which forces the taking of one's own fundamental decision, and of an existential affiliation, which is based on the acceptance of decisions already taken; and of course in the latter case opposition towards something is not lacking, only the remedy is simply sought and found in identification with the avowed enemies of the subject's enemy – or else conversely: the subject makes enemies of its friends' enemies. Be that as it may: the existential affiliation grants – and very often demands – nothing less than the original existential decision, namely it puts at the subject's disposal a world-image as framework of orientation, and it has an identity-forming effect on that subject. In this way the existential intensity can reach a climax even by the mere defence of a pre-existing world-image. Because whoever decides in favour of a world-image decides *eo ipso* in favour of a decision and has to, at whatever level, at least partially reiterate each respective act or process of the decision. That deepest existential affiliation can be highest existential intensity constitutes in itself a powerful argument against every romanticism of the decision. Furthermore, against the romantic comparison of the decision's situation and everyday life turns the ascertainment that there can be no human everyday life which is not based on a certain world-image and certain behaviour, so that it is more or less consciously delimited from other world-images and behaviours. At least in this sense each everyday life is founded on a decision. Incidentally, the



sensitivity with which people usually react to violations of the rules of everyday life is a clear instance of those rules having the character of a decision. That people are not required in 'everyday life' to decide *ex nihilo* on their world-image and behaviour, in no way means that they do not orientate themselves and behave on the basis of fundamental decisions, which only remain not reflected upon as long as they are not (openly) disputed; and in practice they are disputed much more frequently than most would like to believe. Habituation to a certain 'everyday life' from this point of view comes to the same thing as practice in a world-view decision or perhaps even as rediscovery of that same decision, whereby a sense of existential affiliation is necessarily aroused quite irrespective of whether it attains extraordinary existential intensity or not. Against the romantics of the decision, who, sometimes not without autobiographical allusions, stress the existentially extreme, as it were, heroic element in the decision, it is to be asserted that the decision very often can be an attempt at adaptation of a weak and apprehensive existence in its search for identity and self-assertion. With regard to that, the identity must be defended so much the more doggedly the more insecure and disagreeable the situation was to which it put an end; here the 'heroic' element actually follows the decision instead of accompanying that decision. Consequently, that which the militant decisionists call decision is often nothing other than such a defence of the identity, namely decision in defence of an already taken vital decision, which is really borne by the whole existence, although the subject in question does not itself (precisely) know of what and in what its whole existence consists.

The full existential participation of the subject in the decision makes the conventional contradistinction between cognitive act and volitional act, between knowledge or mind and volition in general, meaningless and makes that contradistinction completely unsuitable for the comprehension of concrete biopsychical processes. In reality this contradistinction is not based on empirical findings, but it was originally made up in the framework of ancient-Christian metaphysics, which carried out a structuring of the psyche in accordance with the model of its general conception of the hierarchy of the strata of being; the supposed parallelism of psychical capacity and strata of being was here meant to serve as proof that pure thought culminated in pure, true being as well as vice versa. Of course, in the Modern Era the primacy of the theory of knowledge (extensively) replaced the primacy of ontology, none the less the old metaphysical structures and priorities were kept alive in many ways in the new theory of knowledge and psychology, which because of that for a long time had as their main concern a



determination of the relations between mind and sensuality or between knowledge and volition. A scientific observation is by no means obliged to take up the heritage of the history of ideas that accumulated in such a way, although, as things are, it sees itself obliged to use the terms 'mind' and 'volition'. But it is permitted to use them only in order to comprehend the activities that are roughly indicated by those terms as both the inseparable aspects of the same biopsychical act or process – still more: in order to show that they completely fuse within the act or process of the decision. The decisionist theory expounded here consequently does away with not only the normativistic-axiological, but also the anthropological and epistemological remnants of classical metaphysics. Now, fusion of mind and volition does not mean that one is absorbed, so to speak, by the other, so that eventually mind is completely transformed into volition and volition into mind (in their conventional sense). Rather it means that the volition, in which the instinct of self-preservation stirs and is articulated, fulfills cognitive functions and actually only as knowing volition can it will; conversely, knowledge is only possible as knowledge that wills, i.e. as such a knowledge that has motives behind it, ends before it and above it controlling centres of power. We point to this complex unity when we say the de-cision shapes the world-image and the identity of its subject. As separation the de-cision in fact is equivalent to division containing judgement and, since it separates both the relevant from the irrelevant and determines the hierarchy and structure of the relevant, that is why in it there is a conclusion as to what is the relevant element on each particular occasion, a conclusion that is simultaneously a ver-dict on itself. Incidentally, it is not a matter of the subject proceeding to the formation of its world only after the exhaustive investigation and patient weighing up of all its pre-world's constituent elements; so conscientious a rational procedure would hardly ever have any prospect of being completed whilst the daily needs of self-preservation are pressing. Thus, the pre-world's relevant constituent elements appearing *prima vista* quickly push themselves to the forefront and become – at least temporarily – points of attraction and crystallisation, around which the individual pieces of the world-image coming into being gather and are ordered. This seems all the more unavoidable as even the processing of the pre-world's components in accordance with the world being formed presupposes some starting point and basis; and since knowledge begins precisely with this processing, that is why already from its beginnings it has to be interwoven with certain evaluations (even at the elementary level of the pleasure principle), for which what is fundamental is the separation of the relevant from the



irrelevant. Precisely herein is the inseparable unity of the cognitive and the volitive element founded.

Therefore, this unity constitutes a mere description of the de-cision and consequently of the existence that fully participates in it. In the decision and as a de-cision knowledge not only contains an object, but also and above all a subject, which again does not function e.g. as a mere conveyer of *a priori* categories etc., but as a source – indeed often sparsely flowing, but never running dry – of existential energy, which permeates knowledge. Accordingly, knowledge is a certain interweaving of object and subject, which takes place as the subordination of the former to the latter, particularly as interpretation of that object by this subject. Organ and at the same time addressee of this interpretation is the existence in its construction on each particular occasion, i.e. in each particular composition and mixing of the unconscious and the conscious, of impulses and discursive Reason, of volition and mind within its range. Because of that, consolidation of the identity of the subject or existence is equivalent to the fixing of the interpretation of the objects, which emerge on the subject's or existence's horizon. Without knowing interpretation and interpreting knowledge there is no fundamental stance, and without a fundamental stance no knowledge can stand firm. The volition of he who understands and the content of the mind flow into each other in the fundamental stance – and (interpreted) Is and (objectivised) Ought do the same in that stance. Because the decision must carry in itself its own normative justification, i.e. it takes place only as creation of such a world-image in which the knowledge of objects and the safeguarding of the identity of the subject necessarily go together. Thus, decision is a knowledge anchored in certain criteria in which the volition (of self-preservation) of the subject in question is concretised. The mutual dependence of evaluation and knowledge, which characterises the world-view decision, only constitutes the expression of the fusion of mind and volition in the subject of this decision, i.e. in the existence that carries the decision. Once the subject of the decision acquires consciousness – even if dull – and consequently the process of the decision has started, there cannot be a monopoly of 'blind' volition at any of the subsequent levels and stages anymore; volition is always bound to some thought-form or some thought-content. If within the pre-world the naked instinct of self-preservation or the elementary form of the pleasure principle stimulates all actions and reactions, then within the world existential intensity only occurs in more or less close interrelation with cognitive performances. As existential intensity of the highest level (no matter whether in the form of existential opposition or existential affiliation) the decision contains its specific thought-content



from the beginning in itself, although it gives that content rationally processed expressions only gradually and often in a contradictory manner. Incidentally, this fusion of mind and volition in the world-view fundamental decision makes the already discussed mechanism of this decision's interaction with the partial decisions, through which the fundamental stance is converted into concrete practice, more understandable. Namely, the definitive presence of the volitive element in the fundamental stance from the outset makes the push toward continuation of the process of the decision irresistible, even if this time in the form of concrete practical steps in the framework of the ordered world. So the decision as Whole is not the mere, in itself independent intellectual-spiritual or psychical preparation for practice, but practice itself in a broad sense. Therefore, the so-called unity of theory and practice reflects the fusion of mind and volition; as expression of a volition theory is a form of practice, and this in turn can hardly manage without a – often not reflected upon – world-view basis.

The de-cision comes about in and through the dynamic of the instinct of self-preservation, which thereby creates a fixed framework of orientation. Because from the decision comes a world-image, wherein the subject struggling for self-preservation is assigned a certain place. That is interpreted *eo ipso* as recognition of this same subject's right to existence in the world, which in turn contributes to the strengthening of its elementary sense of power. The subject acquires power first of all by being capable of safeguarding its own self-preservation, and this ultimately occurs in the form of attainment of a fixed identity within an ordered world. The sense of power and identity are connected in two ways, as the identity is the confirmation that self-preservation can be successfully struggled for, but also confirmation that there exists something completely determined, which ought to be preserved. The incorporation of the identity into the hierarchy of the world-image lends a wider, highly important dimension to the sense of power: henceforth self-preservation does not appear as a merely temporary result of an existential effort, whose regular repetition in the future, however, no-one can guarantee, but as function of a deeper agreement with the course of the world, as command of the internal logic and structure or even as meaning of the world. Thus, the subject sees its power increase at the moment it does not rely alone anymore on its own, necessarily limited forces, but connects its activity with the higher forces which prevail in its world-image. Here the way the fusion of mind and volition during the formation of a world-image works is concretely seen: namely, the mind rationalises the endeavour of volition at guaranteeing self-preservation through the expansion of power – and at the same time the mind makes the



expansion of power, at least ideationally, possible, whilst it supports the claim to self-preservation on the broad basis of the world-image.

Therefore, the transformation of the elementary effort at self-preservation into refined endeavour at expanding power marks the threshold at the world-view decision, which for its part goes with a projection of the effort at self-preservation at the already outlined level of the world-image. The necessity of that transformation now becomes understandable if we think of the immanent dynamic character of the effort at self-preservation. Of course, in itself the term 'self-preservation' is misleading, as it seems to point to a static situation. And yet successful self-preservation has *eo ipso* as its necessarily long-term consequence self-intensification, that is, expansion of power. The process of self-preservation by no means takes place in a vacuum, but it signifies – in a biological respect – an unceasing metabolism, that is, a certain relationship with a certain environment. Need is that situation which endangers the metabolism and consequently self-preservation; it can only be overcome through an effective fight against the threatening factors. That is why need, struggle and self-preservation belong together: whoever gives up his self-preservation and self-assertion cannot find himself in any need. For man, who has to make up for innate biological shortcomings by taking precautions, the temporary situation of satisfaction of needs does not constitute the starting point of all fundamental considerations and actions, which refer to self-preservation, but exactly the situation of need constitutes that starting point. Need sets in because the equipment available against it is not sufficient, which suggests the inference that even better equipment is necessary for the future prevention of need, that is to say, for the safeguarding of self-preservation. The previous level of safety can henceforth obviously be regained and defended only through more intensive measures of self-preservation, i.e. new need can only possibly be avoided when the equipment available more or less exceeds current immediate security needs. That is the reason why self-preservation without self-intensification is not possible in the long-term. And since self-preservation is a function of the preservation of power, that is why self-intensification must be translated into tangible intensification of power. Hence, if self-preservation is understood concretely-dynamically, it signifies a power-claim, in particular not merely in the sense of preservation of power, but principally in the sense of that expansion which is able to guarantee on each particular occasion the relative position of power of the subject concerned with regard to the position of power of competing factors that bring about need.



The complex unity of world-view decision and self-preservation can now be understood more concretely as fusion of decision and power-claim, whereby the de-cision is reduced to the power-claim whilst finding expression in the world-image. In so far as the existence can use a world-image apparatus with the above-mentioned functions pertaining to orientation and relief, for its own self-preservation, its power-claims have to really make themselves felt as de-cisive in respect of its world image's construction. The power-claim cuts the Gordian knot of the chaotic pre-world in order to put in its place an organised world, which takes account of the power-claim's own wishes. However, the outlining of a world-image on the basis of certain power-claims is tantamount to the outlining of that same world-image with regard to that which stands in the way of those power-claims – namely out of consideration for an actual or potential foe; in this sense the world-image turns into a reversed image of a foe. In its interrelation with a world-view decision the concept of the foe can possibly encompass everything: inorganic or organic nature, the collective or individual threat, the stranger, the neighbour or the brother – in fact even parts or elements of one's own Self, which appear to constitute a burden in the struggle for life; the foe in short is everything that inspires fear, from which danger comes. The various faces of the foe mix in the various world-images in a different way each time and can often disguise themselves to the point of unrecognisableness. Nevertheless, the foe's definitive, even if negative role during the genesis and concrete formation of the world-view decisions becomes immediately apparent from the simple historical fact that the foe's figure has not hitherto been missing from any greater organised world-image, even if the immoral, the antisocial, oppression or alienation – all of them concepts which by means of concrete interpretation refer to concrete ('unworthy') human existences – take the place of evil spirits or sin for instance; even in the modern natural-scientific world-image, which most of all seems to be above such quarrels, the concepts of the necessary and the accidental, the causal or the indeterminate, the mechanical and the teleological become accepted or are rejected (in fact sometimes they are simply used) out of consideration for a dissident party with respect to world-views, so that the position *vis-à-vis* these concepts amounts to a negative projection of the foe in that world-image. And as subtle as consideration of the foe during the outlining of each respective world-image may be: he is fitted into that world-image in such a way that his subordination or elimination necessarily appears as a command (or even as certainty) in view of the objective composition of the world; incidentally, precisely because of



that delimitation from the pre-world is not the only part of a world-image, but also there is a specific internal hierarchy in each particular instance.

The presence of the foe in the decision – a presence, which, as we must repeat, is inevitable on account of the automatic transformation of the effort at self-preservation into a power-claim – is now connected with an essential feature of this same decision, namely its historicalness. In other words: the concrete historicalness of the decision consists in its shaping whilst constantly considering a foe, who is historically given and in no way is bypassed. Hence, the foe is destiny, i.e. the negative determination of he who decides for himself with regard to that foe; because the decision has to seek and embody the opposite of that for which the foe stands. Consequently, the foe anticipates *ex contrario* the concrete content of the decision. THAT the existence has to take its decision is inevitable anyway, since it wants to be preserved, that is, be orientated and to act; WHAT it wants to be made content of its decision depends on its biopsychical composition and its concrete situation, namely on the factors which stipulate for it, as it were, its own foe. To be sure, the distinction between the THAT and WHAT of the decision remains purely theoretical; in reality the necessity of the THAT dawns in the existence at the same moment as the outline of the WHAT. Therefore, contact with the foe and projection of a power-claim are the first de-cisive step toward the reality of the ordered world. Precisely because the decision is by its nature a power-claim, it cannot, and is not permitted to, make up a solipsistic act or process, but it must contend with a reality – of course processed ideationally in accordance with its needs. Power-claims are not fulfilled in subjective emptiness, but constitute the most urgent, and because of that also the deepest relationship with the world. As a rule, moralists do not want to see that one from a distance or from above is in fact able to love, but is not able to make power-claims that are taken seriously, and therefore that the impulse to come into close contact with the world can have quite different motives from 'altruistic' ones, and actually can be a command of self-preservation or the increase of power. Not only do the dynamics of self-preservation press toward the decision, but also the decision, seeing that it is in the final analysis clarification and the founding of the power-claim in terms of a world-view, drives toward constant practical confrontation with the ordered world – amongst whose constituent elements the foe is also situated, that it itself created for the purpose of this confrontation.

The reproach often made against decisionism, that it confines itself to the imponderable subjectivity of the decision and neglects the historical conditions of action, can therefore only be valid in relation to militant